31 MAY 1958
STATE LEGISLATURE, MADRAS

THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, the 13th February 1958.

The House met in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at three of the clock, Mr. Chairman (THE HON. DR. P. V. CHERIAN) in the Chair.

I—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Temple at Vellore Fort

* 11 *Q*.—SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM: Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state with reference to the answers to supplementaries to the Legislative Council Question No. 127-A, dated 27th December 1956—

(*a*) whether any reply has been received by the State Government from the Government of India in regard to the revival of puja in the temple at Vellore Fort; and

(*b*) if so, the further action taken or proposed to be taken to reinstall the sacred idol for worship in the temple?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: (*a*) A reply was received from the Government of India stating that they do not find it possible to agree, after renovation and rebuilding, to declaring open for public worship or remove from protection under the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archælogical Sites and Remains (Declaration of National Importance) Act, 1951, the temple under reference, as there was no public worship at the premises, as was the case of many other monuments, when it was taken over for protection by the Union Department of Archæology in 1917.

(*b*) The Government have dropped further action in the matter.

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM: Sir, are there not other temples notified under the Ancient and Historical Monuments Act such as the great temple at Tanjore, the Jayankondan temple in Jayankondasholavaram and the Kailasanathar temple at Kancheepuram and may I know why worship should be denied in this temple alone?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: As has been pointed out in my answer, unlike the other institutions taken over, in this particular institution, there was no worship when it was taken over. Further, I understand that there was no idol at all. I do not think it would serve any purpose to bring a new idol, install it and start worship again.

[13th February 1958

SRI V. CHAKKARAI CHETTY : What have the Government of India to do with this temple? Are they the guardians of all temples in the North and the South?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Sir, this structure has been taken over under the Ancient and Historical Monuments Act and, therefore, it is under the jurisdiction of the Government of India.

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : May I appeal to the Government and ask if they could not convey to the Central Government the feelings of a large section of the public in this matter and ask them to reconsider this question on such terms and conditions as they may deem fit, and even if it be necessary, by opening a separate entrance for the temple, barring the ancient monument referred to?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : As the hon. Member is aware, the main object of worship in a Hindu temple is some idol and there is no idol at all here. Therefore, I am unable to understand the feelings of the people that the temple should be brought up again for worship.

SRI K. BALASUBRAMANYA AYYAR : Sir, may I say that there was an idol there? That is a matter of history and it was removed during the invasions. Therefore, may I suggest to the Government to consider whether on account of the historical circumstances we should not press on the Government of India to reconsider their decision which would have been done but for the fact that the Ministry there is manned by Muslims?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I may inform the hon. Member that there is also a mosque without worship within that structure. Apart from that, if the hon. Member could give me any information that that idol which was lost could be traced, I could now consider whether we could address the Government of India again.

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : Sir, have not the public come forward to make arrangements for reinstallation of the idol in this temple and would the Government at least as a last resort consider the deletion or withdrawal of the notification and exclude it—I mean the temple portion leading to the ancient monument portion, viz., the Kalyana Mahal said to be of great archæological importance—from the purview of the Ancient Monuments Act, so that the public may not be denied the elementary right of worship in this ancient temple, especially as the public have offered to reinstall the idol there and arrange for puja, etc.?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I shall repeat what I have stated earlier, namely, that if the idol which was there previously and which had been lost for a long time could be traced, we could consider the question.

13th February 1958]

SRI K. BALASUBRAMANYA AYYAR : May I point out that it is not necessary that the old idol should be traced and reinstalled? For example—the hon. Member Sri P. T. Rajan who is here will bear out my statement—in the famous temple at Somanath, the old idol of Somanath was lost and another idol was installed recently.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Somanath had a different history and that does not apply to this temple.

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : Even the proposal to trace the old idol is not a difficult proposition. But I am told that from the Agamic point of view, the idol which had been desecrated cannot be reinstalled and that, therefore, the public have come forward to install a new idol. May, I therefore, request the Hon. Minister most humbly to reconsider the matter and see what best could be done in view of the public feeling in the matter?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : It may perhaps be possible to bring the temple under worship if the notification under the Ancient Monuments Act could be withdrawn, but I do not think it is right to have that notification withdrawn.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to convey the feelings of this House in the matter to the Government of India and also say that my learned colleague here has said that that order was passed because the Education Ministry was run by Muslims? I am very sorry about that sad remark and I would even request my hon. Friend to withdraw it.

SRI K. BALASUBRAMANYA AYYAR : There are some allegations which are proved.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : If the House expresses an opinion by bringing in a non-official resolution on a non-official day, certainly this Government would convey the opinions of this House to the Government of India.

Deputy Inspectors of Schools

* 12 *Q.*—SRI V. R. RANGANATHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of ranges of Deputy Inspectors of Schools in the State;

(*b*) the number of posts of Deputy Inspectors of Schools that remained vacant as on 1st July 1957 ; and

(*c*) the number of ranges that were in charge of Junior Inspectors?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : (*a*) 154, Sir.

(*b*) *Nine* posts of Deputy Inspectors of Schools remained vacant on 1st July 1957. These posts have since been filled in.

(*c*) 80 ranges of Deputy Inspectors of Schools are in charge of temporary promotees from the category of Junior Deputy Inspectors of Schools.